“Self-concept, Social support and Self-esteem as the predictors of Imposter Phenomenon among the Himachal Pradesh University Students”.

SYNOPOSIS

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Introduction

Imposter phenomenon can be defined as a collection of feeling of inadequacy that persists even in face of information that the opposite is true. It is basically feeling that you are not really successful, competent, and smart, that is only posing such.

The imposter feeling can be divided into three categories:

Feeling like fake: the belief that one does not deserve his or her success or professional position and somehow other have been deceived into thinking otherwise. This goes together with a fear being, “found out”, discovered or “unmasked”. People who feel this way would identify with statement such as:”I can give the Impression that I am more competent than I really am.” “I am often afraid that others will discover how much knowledge I really lack”.

Attributing success it luck; another aspect of imposter syndrome is the tendency to attribute success to luck or to other external reasons and not to your own internal abilities. Someone with such feeling would refer to an achievement by saying; I just got lucky this time. It was a fluke and with fear that they will not be able to succeed the next time.

Discounting success: The third aspect is a tendency to downplay success and discount it. One with such feeling would discount an achievement by saying, it is not a big deal, it was not important. One example of this is discounting the fact that they made it here, which is really a big success. Or saying I did well because it is an easy class etc. Having a hard time accepting compliments.

Most of person probably could identify with a few statements but not with others. Some people could identify with imposter feeling in some situations and not in others, or maybe you may not identify with these feeling but have friends who do.

Who is likely to have the imposter phenomenon?

The imposter phenomenon is associated is with highly achieving, highly successful people. This makes imposter feeling somewhat different from the concept of low

esteem because there is a discrepancy between the actual achievement and the person's feeling about the achievement that may not be present in low-esteem. People in different professions such as teachers, people in the social sciences, people in academia, actress and actors, may all have imposter feeling. It was originally associated with women but recent research indicated that men suffer in similar numbers.

Attitudes, beliefs, direct messages that we received from our parents or from other significant people in our lives early on may have contributed to the development of imposter feelings. Certain family situations and dynamics tend to contribute to imposter feeling when the success and career aspirations conflicts with the family expectations of the gender, race, religion, or age of the person, families who unrealistic standards, families who are very critical, and families who are ridden with conflict and anger.

Dealing with Imposter Feeling:

If you have imposter feeling does not mean that you are stuck with forever. There are steps that you can take to reduce those feeling and to cope with them when they do come up.

Support: being able to discuss those feeling with others in order to understand that you are not alone and to get a reality check.

Identify those feeling: be aware when you engage in thoughts and feeling of imposter. Awareness is the first step to change and it is not obvious since many times we are not aware of our automatic thoughts.

Automatic Thoughts: Automatic thoughts can be defined can as underlying, unquestioned thoughts, which affect how you perceive an event or situation. These thoughts are often so automatic that they occur very fast and you may not even notice them, but they are affecting your perception. An example of an automatic thought related to imposter syndrome would be I am not smart enough. This underlying thought may lead to thinking such as: everyone else is smarter than me.

Do your own realities check; Question these automatic imposter thoughts and feeling and try to come up with more balanced thoughts.

Understanding the difference between feeling and reality: Some people tend to believe that if they feel something strongly it must be right. When you catch yourself thinking in this way change it to a coping statement of the fact that I feel stupid does not mean that I really am.

Self Concept

One's self concept is also collection of beliefs about oneself that includes elements such as academic performance, gender roles and sexuality, racial identity, and many others. Generally, self-concept embodies the power to Who am I? It is also called as self-construction, self-identity or self-perspective. Self-concept is distinguishable from self-awareness, which refers to the extent to which self-knowledge is clearly defined, consistent and currently applicably to one's self-schemas. Additionally, self-concept interacts with self esteem, self-knowledge, and social self to form the self. Self-esteem refers to the evaluation of one's self-concept and self-schemas to form one's overall self-worth. The self-concept includes past, present and future selves. Future or possible selves represent individuals 'ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, or what they are afraid of becoming. These different selves correspond to one's hope, fears, standards, goals, and threats for their selves. Possible selves may function as incentives for future behavior and also provide an evaluative and interpretive context for their current view of self that is used when one self-evaluates, contributing to one's self –esteem. Self- esteem and self-concept cannot be used interchangeably. Self-esteem focuses on an evaluative and opinioned aspect to one's self (I feel good about the fact that I am a fast runner), whereas self-concept is more of a cognitive or descriptive component to one's self (e.g. am a fast runner). This distinction is important to note. As self-concept and self-esteem closely interact to form an overall view of the self. If people have strong self-concept about themselves then, there may be less symptom of the imposter syndrome in them and if self concept is not strong or weak then there may be more symptom of imposter syndrome. Individuals often form their self-

concept based on past experiences of success or failure, attributing the outcome to their own personal worth. By doing this individuals can commit the fundamental attribution error. In this case, the error may be arise when the person falsely believes that a specific aspect of who they are determined the positive or negative outcome. By attributing a negative outcome to oneself can increase self-concept. These attributes can even have on self-perception, achievement behaviors in the future, and expectancies. Changes in self-concept can be mediated and predicted by various factors. One important factor in academics is evaluation of performance by peers, or peer academic reputation (PAR) .If a student has a reputation for success or failure in the academics setting, the student may develop a negative self-concept. This shows that it is may also be the secondary effects of poor academic reputation among peers that influence student's self-concept. There are also effects that have been studying by looking at how self-concept can influence success or failure and attributions of success and failure.

Social support

Social support is the perception and actuality that one is cared for, has assistance available from other people and that one is a part of a supportive social work. These supportive recourses' can be emotional (i.e. nurturance), tangible (i.e. financial assistance), informational (i.e. advice) or championship (i.e. sense of belonging) Social support can be measured as the perception that one has assistance available, the actual received assistance, or the degree to which a person is integrated in a social network. Support can come from any sources such as family, friends, pets, organization, coworkers etc. Government provided social support is often related to as public aid.

Social support can be categorized and measured in several different ways.

There are four common function of social support.

- Emotional support is the offering of empathy, concern, affection. Love, trust, acceptance, intimacy, encouragement or caring. It is the warmth and nurturance provided by sources of social support. Providing emotional

support can let the individual know that he or she is valued .It is also sometime called esteem support or appraisal support.

- Tangible support is the provision of financial assistance, material gold or services. Also called instrumental support, this support of social support encompasses the concrete, direct ways people assists others.
- Informational support is the provision of advice, guidance, suggestion or useful information to someone. This type of information has the potential to help others problem-solve.
- Championship support is the type of support that gives someone a sense of social belonging. This can be seen as the presence of companies to engage in shared social activities with.

  It is often seen that the person who have good social support from his peers, family and others sources have less symptoms of imposter syndrome. Therefore such persons actually share their all things or matters with their peers and friends which help to control the imposter syndrome. If any person have symptoms of imposter syndrome, then he should have to share his problems with his family members, co-worker and peers, which helps to control the imposter syndrome to the some extent. Thus social support is very important to overcome the imposter syndrome to some extent.

Self-esteem

Self-esteem is a term used in psychology to reflect a person's overall emotional evaluation of his or her own worth. It is a judgment of oneself as well as an attitude towards the self. Self-esteem encompasses beliefs (for example, "I am competent," "I am worthy") and emotions such as triumph, despair, pride and shame. Smith and Mackie define it by saying "The concept is what we think about the self: self-esteem is positive or negative evaluations of self, as in how we feel about it."Self-esteem is also known as the evaluative dimension of the self that includes feeling of worthiness, prides and discouragement. One's self-esteem is also closely associated with self-consciousness.

Self-esteem is a disposition that a person has which represents their judgments of their own worthiness. In the mid-1960s, Morris Rosenberg and social-learning theorists defined self-esteem as a personal worth or worthiness. Nathaniel Branden in 1969 defined self-esteem as “the experience of being competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and being worthy of happiness”. According to Branden, self-esteem is the sum of self-confidence (a feeling of personal capacity) and self-respect (a feeling of personal worth).It exists as a consequence of the implicit judgment that every person has of their ability to face life’s challenges, to understand and solve problems, and their right to achieve happiness, and be given respect. The importance of self-esteem lies in the fact that it concerns to ourselves, the way we are and the sense of our personal value. Thus, it affects the way we are and act in the world and the way we are related to everybody else. Nothing in the way we think, feel, decide and act escapes the influence of the self-esteem. Self-esteem requires “a self-evaluation process in which individuals compare their description of themselves as they would like to become Ideal Self and as they fear becoming Degraded Self. Self-Esteem depends on living up to one’s ideals. Positive self-esteem persons may have less symptoms of imposter phenomenon, whereas negative self-esteem persons may have much more symptoms of imposter phenomenon.

Review of literature

The term review means organize the knowledge of the specific area of research to evolve and edifice of knowledge to show that the proposed study would be an addition to this field.

Clanes and Imes (1978) faced with a project (and therefore an obligation to perform), imposters experience the Imposter Cycle. This cycle begins with worry, self-doubt, and intense rear of discovery which then lead to either procrastination or over-preparation. This is typically followed by the project's success, but the success is then attributed to some external cause. The procrastination or over-preparation, for the imposter, reinforces her belief that success was not authentic.

Stahal, Turner, Wheeler, and Elbert (1980) examined imposter phenomenon among high achieving African American high school girls and found that 55% attributed their achievements to reasons others than ability or intellect.

Harvey (1981) showed in his research that imposter feeling were shared similarly by both males and females.

Clance and O'Toole (1987) suggest that false and non-affirming family messages contribute to the development of imposter feeling.

Cromwell (1990) found that mean imposter scores among high achieving high school students were similar to previous mean scores using young adult samples. Based on these studies it appears those imposters feeling are well established by adolescence. The purpose of this study was to extend previous Imposter phenomenon adolescent research and to ascertain the best predictors of high Imposter phenomenon scores based on the variables of gender, global self-worth, social support and self-concept.

Gray (1992) found retrospectively that adult imposters often felt misunderstood by emotionally distant parents. In view of the fact that the identification of imposter phenomenon feeling requires certain cognitive developmental advance (the ability to be retrospective), research has primarily been limited to adults.

However adolescence is a development period when much self-reflection takes place.

Brown (1993) described self-esteem as a strong generalized liking and positive regard for the self- affection for the self.

Thompson, Foreman and Martin (2000) examined that impostors have a high fear of negative evaluation from other people and previous research into the impostor phenomenon, it is evident that one basis of impostor fears is fear of social exposure: being exposed to others as fraudulent and lacking in ability, thereby attracting negative judgements from others.

Sonnak and Towell (2001) found in their study that parental care score, parental educational and occupational level and subject's mental health and demographic information did not show a significant relationship to impostor scores. A post-hoc regression analysis indicated, however, that in addition to parental protection, lower care and poorer mental health was significantly related to increasing levels of impostor scores and with subjects having attended private school reporting lower levels of impostor feelings. These findings, which are interpreted in terms of parenting styles, indicate that the role of parental overprotection may be especially implicated in impostor fears.

Fruhan (2002) examined in his study that the explored feeling of fraudulence or imposter phenomenon in the early professional lives of women. The imposter phenomenon has been described as a sense of intellectual in authenticity experienced by many individuals, particularly high-achieving women. Thirteen professional women from the fields of education, law, medicine and psychology were interviewed for this study. Finding reveals that the onset of feeling of fraudence occurred most often during the transition from the childhood to adolescence, usually within the academic realm.

Ross and Krukowski (2003) found in his results that additional evidence for the construct validity of Imposter Phenomenon as a maladaptive style which emphasis a pervasive sense of inferiority, fear and self-deprecation.

Castro, Jones and Mirsalimi (2004) in his results studied that parentification and Imposter Phenomenon are moderately correlated. No significant gender differences were found for either construct. With regard to racial/ethnic differences, no significant differences were found in parentification score, however Caucasians' endorsed significantly highly Imposter Phenomenon can be explained in part as a significant long term effect of childhood parenification.

Kumar and Jagacinski (2006) investigated that the relationship between fears and achievement goals. Both imposter fears and ability avoid achievement goals were positively related to test anxiety and negatively related to confidence in one's intelligence. Women expressed greater imposter fears than men and were also higher on ability-avoid goals.

McGregor, Gee and Posey (2008) examined the relation between the Imposter phenomenon and depression among college students. Results of Pearson product-moment correlation yielded a positive correlation between the IP and BDI-II scores. The main effect between sex and IP score indicates that women have higher IP scores than men. However, the effect between sex and BDI was not statistically significant.

Sahragaed and Baharloo (2009) showed that fear of success and imposter phenomenon did not correlate with their language proficiency and academic achievement significantly. Moreover the result of the independent t-tests indicated that male and female participants' performances on the three instruments did not differ significantly. In addition, one way ANOVA which were run to determine the impact of academic level on each of the variables understudy revealed that seniors outperformed the other levels on their language profiency.

Watson and Bretts (2010) in their study describe that the purpose of their study is to connect the theoretical frameworks around this phenomenon to our experiences as women graduate students in a doctoral program. The research question for this study is: Do our email conversations provide us with clues to explain our imposter feelings? The methodology for this study is auto ethnography (Ellis, 1997). Emails collected over an eight month period provide the

data for this study. To analyze the data they used thematic analysis. The data reveal three predominant themes; fear, family and fellowship. The findings of this study provoke an extension into the experiences of other doctoral students as they meet the challenges of self concepts in their course of study.

Ghorbanshirodi (2012) revealed the relationship between self-esteem and emotional intelligence components with imposter syndrome among medical students. Results showed that there was a negative significant correlation between and imposter syndrome, also, there was a significant correlation between "appraisal and expression of emotion" and "utilization of emotion". But the difference between self-esteem and imposter phenomenon correlation coefficient was not statistically significant.

Kamarzarrin, Khaledian, Mozhgan, Shooshtari, Yousefi and Ahrami (2013) studied the relationship between self-esteem and the imposter phenomenon in the physicians of Rasht city in Iran. Results have shown that there is a significantly negative inverse correlation between self-esteem and imposter phenomenon. In this study the correlation coefficient differences between self-esteem and imposter phenomenon of male and female physicians were not statistically significant. From these finding, it is concluded that individuals with imposer, despite the existence of external evidences of achievement s are incapable of internalizing them and that uncertain self-esteem is one the characteristics of such individuals.

Need and significance of the study

In the present context the study of imposter phenomenon is very important to overcome the imposter phenomenon i.e. fake like feeling in the students. It is helpful to overcome the symptoms of imposter phenomenon which are given below:

(1) The persistent belief in one's lack of competence, skill or intelligence in the face of consistent objective data to the contrary.
(2) An internal experience of intellectual fraudulence, particularly among high achievers.

(3) The belief that one does not deserve of his/her career success and that others have been deceived into thinking otherwise.
(4) An intense subjective fear of the inability to repeat past successes.
(5) A self-concept that one's record of accomplishments is not due to ability but rather to luck, fate, charm, attractiveness or having manipulated other people's impressions.
(6) The secret conviction that one is truly less intelligent and competent than he/she appears.
(7) An unrealistic sense of one's competence in which one down-play strengthens and exaggerates or does not tolerate any deficiencies or weaknesses.

Thus, the study undertaken will be more significant and relevant in the present context.

Statement of the Problem

"Self-Concept, Social Support and Self-esteem as the predictors of Imposter Phenomenon among students of Himachal Pradesh University".

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the self-concept as the predictor of imposter phenomenon among the male and female students of Himachal Pradesh University.
2. To study the social support as the predictor of imposter phenomenon among the male and female students of Himachal Pradesh University.
3. To study the self-esteem as the predictor of imposter phenomenon among the male and female students of Himachal Pradesh University.
4. To study the self-concept as the predictor of imposter phenomenon among the science and non-science students of Himachal Pradesh University.
5. To study the social support as the predictor of imposter phenomenon among the science and non-science students of Himachal Pradesh University.
6. To study the self-esteem as the predictor of imposter phenomenon among the male and female students of Himachal Pradesh University.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

(1) Self-concept will be the strong predictor of Imposter Phenomenon as compared to the social support and self-esteem among the male and female students of Himachal Pradesh University.
(2) Social support will be the strong predictor of Imposter Phenomenon as compared to the self-concept and self-esteem among the male and female students of Himachal Pradesh University.
(3) Self-esteem will be the strong predictor of Imposter Phenomenon as compared to the self-concept and social support among the male and female students of Himachal Pradesh University.
(4) Self-concept will be the strong predictor of Imposter Phenomenon as compared to the social support and self-esteem among the science and non-science students of Himachal Pradesh University.
(5) Social support will be the strong predictor of Imposter Phenomenon as compared to the self-concept and self-esteem among the science and non-science students of Himachal Pradesh University.
(6) Self-esteem will be the strong predictor of Imposter Phenomenon as compared to the self-concept and social support among the science and non-science students of Himachal Pradesh University.

Operational Definitions of Key Terms:

(1) Imposter Phenomenon: It is a collection of feeling of inadequacy that persists even in face of information that the opposite is true. It is basically feeling that you are not really successful, competent, and smart, that is only posing such.
(2) Self-esteem: It is used to reflect a person's overall emotional evaluation of his or her own worth. It is a judgment of oneself as well as an attitude towards the self.
(3) Social Support: It is the perception and actually that one is cared for, has assistance available from other people and that one is a part of a supportive social work. These supportive recourses can be emotional, tangible, informational or championship.

(4) Self Concept: It is the collection of beliefs about oneself that includes elements such as academic performance, gender roles and sexuality, racial identity, and many others. Generally, self concept embodies the power to who am I?

Methods and Procedure

Research Design

In order to accomplish the objectives of the present study the Descriptive method of research will be used.

Sample:

The sample of the present study will include 300 male and 300 female students from the different departments of Himachal Pradesh University through the random sampling.

Layout of the design

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">HP University Students
(600)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Male
(300)</td><td colspan="2">Female
(300)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Science
(150)</td><td>Non-Science
(150)</td><td>Science
(150)</td><td>Non-Science
(150)</td></tr>
<tr><td>High Self Concept
(75)</td><td>Low Self Concept
(75)</td><td>High Self Concept
(75)</td><td>Low Self concept
(75)</td></tr>
</table>

Layout of the design

HP University Students (600)			
Male (300)		Female (300)	
Science (150)	Non-Science (150)	Science (150)	Non-Science (150)
High Social Support (75)	Low Social Support (75)	High Social Support (75)	Low Social Support (75)

Layout of the design

HP University Students (600)			
Male (300)		Female (300)	
Science (150)	Non-Science (150)	Science (150)	Non-Science (150)
High Self Esteem (75)	Low Self Esteem (75)	High Self Esteem (75)	Low Self Esteem (75)

Research Tools

In present study four tools will be used for collection of primary data from different sources. The questionnaire will be

(1) The Clance Imposter Phenomenon Scale (1985) will be adopted.
(2) The self-concept Scale by Dr. Mohsin (1976).
(3) The by Self- Esteem M.S. Prasad and G.P.Thakur (1976).
(4) The Self- Support Scale to be developed by the investigator.

Procedure of Analysis of the Data

In the present study to analyse the data correlation, regression, and prediction methods will be used.

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